



## **News Release**

For Immediate Release:  
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### **U.S. Food Guide Pyramid Getting Remodeled** Utahns Urged to Comment on Nutrition Recommendations

(Salt Lake City, UT) – Utahns have just one week left to comment on the new dietary guidelines for Americans currently under review by the federal government. Perhaps best known to the public as the “food guide pyramid,” the guidelines are updated every five years by the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Agriculture (USDA).

The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) supports the recommendations for new dietary guidelines set forth in the 2005 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee Report to the Secretaries of HHS and USDA. The major messages recommended by the report include:

- Consume a variety of foods within and among the basic food groups while staying within energy needs.
- Control calorie intake to manage body weight.
- Be physically active every day.
- Increase daily intake of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and nonfat or low-fat milk and milk products.
- Choose fats wisely for good health.
- Choose carbohydrates wisely for good health.
- Choose and prepare foods with little salt.
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.
- Keep food safe to eat.

The UDOH feels that conveying the message of balancing caloric intake and physical activity is of paramount importance. In order to meet this goal, the messages should be delivered using language and graphics that are as easy as possible to understand. The graphic presentation of the messages, in a pyramid or any other format, should focus on

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the food groups that most Utahns and Americans have trouble getting enough of, namely, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Research has shown that these foods play a role in preventing cardiovascular disease, cancer, and obesity. Heart-healthy fats such as those in olive oil, nuts, and fish should also be emphasized.

The UDOH strongly encourages including physical activity as a prominent component in the new dietary guidelines graphic. Utah faces the same obesity epidemic as the rest of the country. More than 54 percent of adult Utahns were overweight or obese in 2003, and 1 out of 4 school age children in Utah are overweight or at risk for overweight. Although some have blamed the food guide pyramid for contributing to this problem, it is evident from the science cited in the report that both Americans and Utahns eat too much and move too little.

UDOH encourages organizations and individuals to provide written comments on the Report of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005 to the Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Agriculture by Monday, Sept. 27. Written comments can be submitted at [www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines](http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines) or mailed to Kathryn McMurry, HHS Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office of Public Health and Science, Suite LL100, 1101 Wootton Parkway, Rockville, Md. 20852. An electronic copy of the advisory committee document is available at [www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines](http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines).

For more information about the UDOH's specific recommendations, contact Rachel Cox, Dietitian, Heart Disease & Stroke Prevention Program, UDOH, and 5 A Day Association of Utah Coordinator, at 801-538-6269 or [rachelcox@utah.gov](mailto:rachelcox@utah.gov). For more information about heart healthy eating tips and recipes, visit [www.hearhighway.org](http://www.hearhighway.org).

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*The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.*